1:Marshall E-5 (1952-1953) 1959 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

side. /Gunda sat behind the line of boys, in a deep shadow, to show that he was 159
'ashamed' and respected (feared, *koa*) the wedding scherm. 585

One of the boys began to play, not their ceremonial music or special wedding music, but songs of the *//gwashi*, as they call them, the little wordless melodies these [533] people compose about happenings in their lives, about pleasures or distress, about their moods. They play and sing these melodies for hours upon hours in the afternoons when they are resting or in the evenings by their fires, and they played for hours that night at the wedding fire.

Soon young guests began to arrive, the children of both werfs with whom /Nai played, all of them younger than the boys who attended /Gunda and the girls who carried /Nai. The youngest guest was the ubiquitous three-year-old boy who never missed anything. No adults came.

One boy brought four mangetti nuts with him and roasted, cracked, and ate them himself. That was all that appeared by way of a feast. Di/ai said that they would like to have given the children something to eat but there was nothing in the werf that night. Even though the others had had something to eat, the bride and groom would have had to abstain. They must not talk or eat, to show they are 'ashamed'. The young guests seemed to enjoy themselves, nevertheless, and were still singing and chatting when I left at midnight.

Soon after sunrise the following morning—/Gunda had already departed—/Nai's mother went to the wedding scherm and sat down beside the embers of the night's fire. /Nai stood shivering beside her in her little genital apron and the duiker skin [291] which women wear around their buttocks and up between their legs, but stripped of her kaross. The mother had brought a little fat (eland fat, if they had it, would be [825] used) and a bit of powdered red stone, one of the red earths (*/gam /gai gwoie*), mixed with fat. She rubbed /Nai all over with the fat, and drew a line on her forehead and [302] a circular design on her cheeks with the red powder mixed with fat. Over in werf 2, Gao, Nai's stepfather, presented /Gunda with a blanket.

This completed the wedding ceremony.

/Nai was a lively child who loved the dancing and singing games the girls play. 159
She often danced alone, tapping her bare feet on a stone in rapid rhythm or making a 462
game of printing a design in the sand with tiny steps. She liked babies and as often as not had her infant half-brother or some very small cousin tied to her back. That morning she appeared to turn into a housewife as though it were her next blithe step. When the women went to gather veldkos, she put on her own little duiker skin [222] kaross, took her digging-stick and went with them. At the end of the day, when they returned in the slanting sunset light, she had two big roots. She went straight to her own fire, blew on the embers, added wood, and sat down. Three ostrich egg shells [415] full of water and her digging-stick were her household goods. These she arranged beside the scherm. /Gunda came and sat down opposite her. She smiled at him and set the roots in the ashes to cook.

It has been said in talks with informants that the bridegroom must bring an 159
antelope which he himself has killed to the parents of the bride before the wedding, 183
but no animal had been brought; there had not been a scrap of meat in the werf for 585
days. I asked Di/ai about this. 'Oh, that,' she said in effect. 'Yes, he should give me an antelope, but we thought we would have the wedding first and that /Gunda would

/150 cont./

525 are placed between the players and taken by the winner, but since the luck often changes during a match, the same prize passes back and forth frequently.

I have seen this game played only by two men (not by women and children). One finds especially passionate players
524 among the Auin, in particular among older men.
535 Dancing game of the women (goei) (see Photos. 36 and 37).

I am in doubt as to whether I should classify this under games or dances.

A number of women line up along a tree trunk lying on the ground. All of them in rhythm alternately place the front part of first the right and then the left foot on the trunk. It proceeds in this fashion, slowly at first, then ever faster. If the women have their backs turned to the tree trunk, they place their heels on it in the same fashion.

Sometimes also two rows of women will face each other.
[533] Frequently, a kind of rhythmical singsong is also uttered by them.

The game is begun with everyone calling out //ai, meaning something like "let's go."

In some dances bucks' horns are tied in front of the forehead (eland bull dance). One can hardly designate these as true masked dances, however.

The Auin are acquainted with stilts, which are used by men
481 and boys. I might mention that I did not see any, but when I described them the Auin seemed to be very familiar with them.

526 Foot races (gâ).

The runners line up in a row, and at the word "gâ" they all run. The winner obtains a prize of food or of some useful object (for example, a knife).

Older people act as judges. Bloody quarrels are said to occur
[578] when the prizes are awarded.

Stick throwing (gai or albi).

Thin sticks of any length up to two meters and taken from the rosinkis bush are thrown forward with a whistling swing and from a running start (they are not flung like a spear, but grasped at one end). The object is to throw as far as possible. No prizes are offered; hence it is a real sport. Since it is fairly strenuous, this game, like all the others, incidentally, is played only when

/150 cont./

526 there is a good supply of food, in other words, only during the crop season (rainy season). Sometimes, also, a heap of sand about one and a half meters high is piled up and one must throw over it.

The game is played for hours by boys and men with great shouts of joy.

[171] [177] This sport is likewise practiced by the Kaffir and Herero. The Auin state that it is not an original Bushman game.

Wrestling (see Photo. 34). This seems to have a somewhat more serious character, since the victor deals severely with the loser and has nothing to do with him for a long time. Nonetheless, the Bushmen designate it as a game.

Shooting with bow and arrow (unpoisoned arrow tip toward the front). The target is a tschama or any other soft object, in order to spare the arrow. One by one, the competitors shoot from the same place. The winner receives a prize (food, a knife, or the like).

Spear throwing. The target (tschama) is placed on a stick planted in the ground.

At a distance of 20 meters, only one throw out of 30, performed by six men, hit the target.

The target was an insert from a flour box.

Prizes are offered.

Riding (see Photo. 35). Two men form a "horse," the third "rides." (Gabi, "to ride.")

[i.e., of stick throwing.--Analyst]

L. Music

534 Musical bows of various sizes made of "rosinkis wood" with animal tendons. The striker is made of any kind of wood.

I have a suspicion that the two Auin in Photograph 38 cheated a bit, because one of them has a shooting bow while the other has taken up any old stick. It is likely that just at that moment they had no proper musical bow at hand. At the same time, of course, it is true that one can make "music" on any strung bow. This music, by the way, is clearly audible to other people, not only to the player.

533 /151/ There are no special musicians. On the other hand, one does find certain individuals who clearly take more joy in

/151 cont./

533 music than others. I have observed a man who played his musical bow in every spare moment.

Rhythmic hand clapping accompanies singing.

534 237 Dance rattles (guri) are made of the cocoons of a night butterfly. These cocoons are strung on strings and dried. While the cocoons are still soft, little stones or pieces of ostrich egg shell are pressed into the inner cavity and the soft envelope is closed over them (see Photo. 39).

535 The rattles, when they are dried and hard, are strung and fastened to the ankle. They are supposed to be used at all dances.

War dance (see Photos. 41 and 42).

The women sit or stand, clapping their hands and singing, while the men crouch or stand opposite them. One man slides out of the row on his knees toward the row of women and makes war-like gestures, as though he were evading an arrow, flinging a spear, etc.

One of the women thrusts out an arm and utters a brief, deep cry, thereby indicating that a spear has been thrown or an arrow shot. The man pretends he is wounded and screams. If he is "dead," he crawls back, and a new solo dancer takes his place. Women, too, are sometimes "dead" or "wounded."

Indecisive battles are indicated.

Here, too, there are very passionate dancers, both male and female, as well as those who have a special talent for mimicry.

The porcupine dance (see Photo. 40) is performed only by men. A number of men stand facing one another, stamp the ground rhythmically, and utter loud shouts. One of them is the "porcupine," which is beaten to death by another man or stabbed with a spear. Everything is indicated by motions.

Eland bull dance. I was unable to learn the nature of this dance, but apparently the rutting lust of the eland is imitated.

M. Means of Transportation

487 Bush paths are formed by the Bushmen on the main lines of traffic, for instance, from the settlement to water. When a 648 Bushman uses the pad (that is, the road of the Whites), he has an

[48 cont.]

755 from ostrich egg shells, had been put on by her proxy, Dube, a
756 very intelligent young woman. The latter, standing at the end of
796 the semicircle of seated women, conducted the ceremony. She
[276] was in a very good mood and alternately smoked her Bushman
[554] pipe and my cigarettes. There is a kind of hierarchy among the women; those who were squatting were higher in rank than those who were standing. All the women clapped their hands and sang
●[533] in a monotonous rhythm: ehe, ehe, ehe, ehe, etc. This, I was assured, was no song, but "music." Some hordes have bartered

[532]

Fig. 19. Sorcerer in a Bird Mask, Followed by Spirits of Sickness. (From Rock Paintings in South Africa. From Parts of the Eastern Province and Orange Free State. Copied by G. W. Stow. With an introduction and descriptive notes by Dorothea Bleek. London, Methuen, 1930.)

dance drums one and a half meters high from the Okawango, which on this occasion are played by men. [Fig. 19 appears
[184] here.] Among the Bushmen of the Sand Veld the female leader of the ceremony does not wear the ornaments of the chief female doctor; instead, the ornaments are hung on a tree. The position of the chief female doctor is not permanently held by one person; the chief doctor on occasion imparts supernatural powers to her.

755 The five doctors had taken off all their ornaments and
756 were naked except for the front apron. They put themselves
786 into an autohypnotic state by means of crowing, by producing
796

/249 cont./

535 low, and at the same time sit on their heels. Two at a time fight out a "run," while the two other pairs are resting and watching. A run lasts for about two minutes; they change opponents in the runs in a certain order, so that each man gets to duel with each of the others.

/250/ A run goes as follows: in their hunched-over position the opponents look each other sharply in the eye as they bend far over as though looking for cover, and they do not take their eyes off each other even during the most violent movements of the arms. With the flat of their hands, the opponents now beat rhythmically and violently on the ground that has been loosened up in front of the players, a powerful blow being followed by a weaker one. At each blow the opponents utter a brief H'hm Hhe testifying to a high degree of physical and psychic tension. [Figs. 5 and 6 appear here.] The H'hm is the louder sound and is also accompanied by the stronger impact of the hands. At the same time motions of covering against the blow or thrust of the opponent are carried out. The face has an angry and at the same time wary expression, while the entire body is tensed to the utmost. After about two minutes have elapsed, one of the fighters makes a motion raising one arm and sinking down backwards, as though he had been struck or killed, while the opponent makes a gesture of triumph over the vanquished enemy.

/251/ The fighters are frequently covered with dirt, by the hands striking the loosened soil, but this does not disturb them in the tense observation of the opponent.

The point of the game is that supposedly one of the fighters has unjustly appropriated food which the other tries to take away from him in the duel. Even old men feeble with age play with great passion and exert all their strength. From time to time the women give water to the exhausted opponents to fortify them.

To be sure, the entire procedure reminds one of dogs or monkeys, furiously facing each other and growling, who are crouched to spring at each other and at the same time hop around in one spot on their front legs. Nonetheless, there is something attractive about it, in spite of the animal gestures and sounds, by virtue of its vivacity and of the emotions expressed by the faces.

533 Whereas the //o //au has no musical accompaniment, the
[535] other dances of the Heikum people are accompanied by a women's
song.

/251 cont./

533 song. The melodies that I had an opportunity to observe were simple tone sequences which I vainly tried to arrange into a definite major or minor key such as is familiar to us. According to European concepts, the intervals are not pure. A common tonal sequence was the following, but in giving it I must

[535]

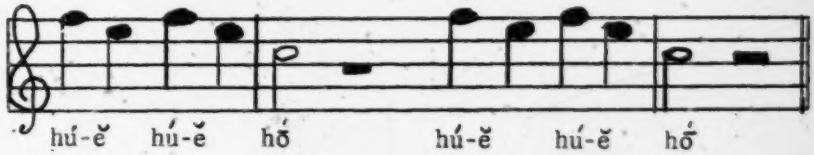
Fig. 5.

[535]

Fig. 6.

once more definitely stress that the intervals do not correspond precisely to those of our major key.

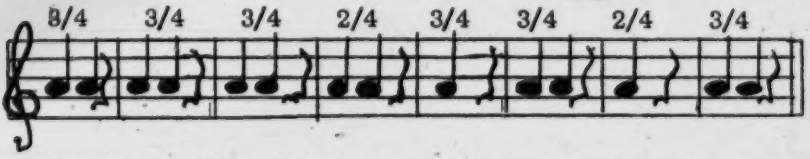
[539]



/251 cont./

533 Between the syllables hu and e a slight tremulo occurs, so that the entire song is reminiscent of yodeling. Instead of the sequence f-e-f-e-c, other tonal sequences were frequently sung, for instance, g-f-g-f-c or g-e-g-e-c. Even more complicated tonal sequences, reminiscent of our seventh chords, were not uncommon.

Singing is always accompanied by handclapping. The rhythm of the clapping is very curious; at any rate, it does not correspond to the feeling for musical rhythm that is familiar to Europeans. Two rhythms in particular have stayed in my memory, and I shall try to characterize them. The reader should think of a rhythm which, at least to my knowledge, does not exist in Aryan music, namely a 5/5 beat. Of the five fifths of this beat, they clap on the first, second, and fourth, while there are pauses on the third and fifth. The beat, in other words, would look as follows, if I designate the clapping sounds with ♩ and the pauses with 𝄽 :

Another clapping rhythm is the following, in which the three-quarter beat alternates with the two-quarter: /252/

535 Such a dance with musical accompaniment is the following, which I should like to designate as the pumpkin dance and which is reminiscent of a ball game frequently played by children in Germany. A number of women march at a rapid pace in goose step on a circular line, at the same time clapping rhythmically with their hands and singing. Among the Heikum the clapping is done [111] with the fingers spread apart, in contrast to the Herero, who clap with their fingers together. At the same time, a pumpkin [melon?] approximately the size of a child's head is thrown from one of the dancers to the other, and always backwards from the person in front to the person just behind her.

/252 cont./

535 The men standing around now attempt to catch the pumpkin as it flies through the air, and the women simulate great indignation when one of the men succeeds in doing so. This man then cuts up the pumpkin with a knife so that a new ball is required in order to continue the game.

Another dance, in which principally men participate, could be designated as the bird dance. The men dance in a circle, while the women stand around the circle, clap their hands, and [534] sing. The men wear dance bangles around their ankles, which are circlets of dried bean pods whose kernels rattle at every step and in this way strongly accentuate the dance rhythm. The steps of the dance are short, scarcely half a foot long, so that the progress of the dancers in the circle is quite slow. The vigor of the stepping or stamping on the ground alternates rhythmically. At the same time a number of symbolic gestures is performed. The most respected of the dancers has tied to his forehead a large eagle's beak decorated with glass and iron beads; he frequently makes a motion of hacking with the beak, and then, by slowly raising his arms, suggests the eagle's calm gliding in the air. Another dancer carries a bird's nest in his hand during the entire dance. At a certain stage, the dancers go through the motion of picking up fruit from the ground by bending down and making scooping motions in the air just above the ground. Shortly thereafter, some men dance towards the women and perform gestures as though they wanted to seize one of the women surrounding them.

535 Suddenly one of the dancers seems about to faint. A spectator
786 whom I questioned concerning the significance of this action told me that the Mukuru (Herero term for God) was in him. Other dancers, maintaining their dance step all the while, stand around the possessed person, try to help him, and cool him with fanning until he suddenly collapses with a piercing shriek. The bystanders catch him and carry him off to one side while the others go on dancing. The "doctor" now concerns himself with the unconscious [755] person; he blows twice in each ear and once on his forehead. Visibly, consciousness now returns and soon the one possessed is able to rise and dance again.

● 533 /253/ The musical accompaniment is supplied solely by the women; however, the dancing men are not entirely silent. Every

/253 cont./

533 once in a while, one of the dancers emits a loud yell, usually in a high falsetto, and sometimes a trill which likewise is pitched as high as possible, depending entirely on the individual's emotional state.

The clapping at a dance is audible over a great distance. One evening when I approached the station, I could hear the clapping of the dancing women at a distance of three kilometers.

535 The dances I have described seem to be widely distributed among the Bushmen. At any rate, I found all three of them with 194 only slight variations among the Kung people residing in the Kaukau Veld.

Concerning the diet of the Heikum Bushmen I was able to dis- 262 cover the following. I should add my regret at this point that I lacked the necessary background for giving the botanical names of the veld crops.

The diet is predominantly vegetable; however, the Bushman is by no means a despiser of flesh. On the contrary, whenever he can have animal food, he will utilize it for his kitchen. In so doing, he is so unselective that one could say he eats everything he can lay his hands on. I have even seen Bushmen consume hyena flesh with great pleasure. The flesh is obtained partly by 224 hunting with bow and arrow, and partly with game traps. I shall discuss the hunting weapons later; here I only want to mention a game snare which I had the opportunity to observe in the Kaukau Veld. A snare twisted from plant bast had been placed on a game trail, drawn upwards by means of a flexible stalk stuck into the ground, and fastened to the ground by means of wooden hooks. When the game touches the snare, releasing it from the hooks, the flexible stalk pulls the snare up and shut. Game is also caught in traps. I was shown an iron hook fastened to a bamboo stick about five meters long, which was used to pull out game that had fallen into the pits.

The animals of the Bushman's hunting domain include all kinds of antelopes, from the giant eland to the tiny duiker, giraffes, hogs, hares, and, in the way of birds, predominantly guinea fowl.

The Bushman, however, finds objects to enrich his cuisine even among lower animals. In the realm of the amphibians he prefers

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

533 534 The young, unmarried man took a small musical instrument out of his hunting-bag, borrowed a dry tsama rind from one of the women, and, setting the instrument on the hollow rind, began to play. He filled the air with sweet, soft music, full of resonance and open, minor chords, even of rhythm and timbre as a music box would be.

The instrument itself was made of a small, flat piece of wood four or five inches square, with eleven metal prongs attached to it, arranged in two rows across two bridges. The melon rind acted as a resonator for the prongs, which were of different sizes and, when plucked, vibrated and rang like bells, in a scale which was not the octave and which I have never heard before. The name of the instrument is *te k'na*, and I believe that it is not native to Bushmen but traded from the Bantu people. Many Bushmen have them, though: Bushmen like music of any kind.

264 Soon the cornmeal was ready and we served it to the visitors on pieces of bark, in bowls formed from halves of tortoise shells, in tsama rinds. Bushmen have very little liquid food that does not come in its own natural container, and therefore they do not provide themselves with bowls. The [446 177] bowls they do have, carved from wood—an art learned from the Bantu people—are constantly in use as containers for small, loose objects, such as seeds or unstrung beads. Since the cornmeal was hot and runny, the people had some difficulty eating it with their fingers, but they got it down, the women hesitating a long time, watching the men, before they [609 538] dared to try it. I think they were afraid it would harm them, as I have heard many Bushman stories of strangers who poison tobacco or food. When they had eaten their servings and 264 609 578 found that they did not die, they had more, a morsel at a time. We might have presented the pot to let the people help themselves, but by now we knew better. Bushmen expect

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

the rider. Sometimes two boys would make the horse, one boy holding the wrists of another boy in front of him while a third boy would ride, and these horses, reinforced, were much more successful, traveling farther at faster speeds. Now and then, as we talked by the fire, one of these little phantom creatures would rush silently by us in the dark, its dark rider in silhouette against the sky.

As we talked, we heard music, very sweet, sad music, as though a music box were playing, coming to us from a little distance away. It was Gai's older son, the boy who had come back with us, playing the te k'na to himself. Thus we discovered that Gai had not fared as badly as it had seemed he did in his meeting with the strange Bushmen, for the te k'na had belonged to the man who had laughed at him. All the Bushmen at the fire, who loved music, stopped their talk to listen, and even the young boys were charmed from their game, for they moved silently toward him and crouched in the cold grass to listen, too. Soon they stood up to dance, a usual Bushman dance of men, taking small, pounding steps, moving in a circle. They danced very well, with freedom and with great precision, but they were too excited to dance for long and instead began to play a dancing game called "Ostrich," performed by two boys dancing forward to face each other. As one either crouches or bends double from the hips, the other, who in the game is called the ostrich, swings his leg over the first boy's back without missing a beat in the rhythm. The boy who bent jumps backward as another boy steps in to take his place. This is repeated again and again, accompanied by spoken, rhythmic sounds: he he *hi*, hehe he *hi*, and the whole game is very fast and vigorous, requiring great practice and co-ordination, as the body movements, which often include the slapping of the elbows against the ribs, are sometimes at counterpoint to the spoken rhythm.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

857 526 535 The game represents ostriches, perhaps ostriches fighting or mating.

The game was intoxicating. The boys danced so fast, so perfectly, and made their rhythm so vigorous and free, that Gai, who had been sitting quietly listening to Ukwane, could stand it no longer. Throwing his great cape around himself, he suddenly leaped to his feet and sprang among the little boys, scattering them like a hawk among sparrows, towering over their heads as he began to dance. He stamped, bent, straightened, and swung his long leg over the little boys' backs, dancing with far more abandon, not as precisely as they, but madly; he took our breath away.

He wore his great kaross backward, flung across his chest, and when he stood still waiting for his turn to leap forward and crouch he was as motionless and dignified as a tribune standing, and when he danced the great wings of his kaross swung like the cape of a bullfighter, masculine, open, and free. He was a wonderful sight, and the old people watching him smiled, and the little boys dancing under his long legs and under the wings of his cape looked up at him and laughed with pleasure because he was playing their game.

Gai was a man of great dignity and for him the dance was not altogether a success, for when the young boys tried to swing their legs over his back they generally kicked him in the rear or in the face. Soon he tired of it and came back to the fire to sit by Ukwane, but he was too excited to stay

524 593 533 quiet long and in a moment he tore off his cape and, calling Ukwane and his oldest son, he began another rhythmic game, called "Kaross." This is played by several men or boys who rub the kaross between their hands in the way that they rub it to soften or cure it, only they rub more vigorously and accompany themselves with several very rhythmic, very gay, fast songs, sung in falsetto, to imitate the falsetto singing of

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

women because, say the men, women's voices are admirably beautiful.

Twikwe and Tsetchwe sat side by side, their legs straight out in front of them, the soles of their feet lit by the fire. They sang gaily and clapped their hands while the baby Nhwakwe walked up and down on Tsetchwe's leg, balancing himself like a child who is walking on a railing, then climbed to her shoulder and stood there triumphantly without holding on, gazing around like a child on a hill. He looked utterly astonished when Tsetchwe suddenly swept him to the ground and, flinging off her cape, jumped to her feet and began to dance. Everyone was astonished. Women almost never dance, although they are quite welcome to, but least of all Tsetchwe, a very conscientious mother and wife.

Tsetchwe's dance was extremely lively and extremely gay, and everyone except Nhwakwe looked up at her happily. She sang and waved her arms with great abandon, and danced her gay dance right behind the men, just for once flinging motherhood to the four winds and dancing right over her baby, who came trotting sadly after her, holding up his arms to be carried. In a moment the baby gave up and went to the lap of his grandmother, frowning as his mother danced happily by him again. When Tsetchwe finally got tired and flung herself down on the ground he ran to her and nursed immediately to reassure himself. She held him loosely in one arm as she coughed from exertion and laughed, with a pleased, shy expression on her face that said: this is what I used to do when I was younger.

When the people were tired of dancing they still seemed to feel like talking, and as the moon was down and the stars showed clearly we asked Ukwane to tell us something about the sky, and we pointed to several stars to learn their names.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

We had stayed up to watch the children's games and also to observe Orion setting, for the Bushmen tell a story of the stars in Orion which takes place in the sky every night at certain seasons and we wanted to see it for ourselves. The story is simply that the god, who at the time the story takes place is standing one one of the Magellan clouds, shoots an arrow at three zebras. The arrow is Orion's sword, the zebras are the three stars of Orion's belt, the star in the center being a male zebra and the two stars flanking him his wives. The arrow falls short, as one can see, and presently, as the constellation touches the horizon, the zebras step upon the earth, first a female, then the male, then the other female. It is slow and deliberate, and that night we saw it plainly. The zebras vanished into the brush at the horizon, but the arrow was still there.

When the constellation had gone, when many of the people were asleep and we were about to leave the werf, Ukwane took out his hunting-bow and, setting one tip on a dry melon shell, he began to tap the string with a reed, making a sound. Soon he played a song, humming a melody and playing an accompaniment on his bow.

He sat alone at his fire, his wife a tiny heap under her kaross and fast asleep some distance away. He was squatting, his eyes on the embers of his fire, holding one end of the bow with his toes. With the fingers of one hand he touched the string, making different notes, and when he wanted to change the pitch he turned his head slightly, catching the other end of the string with his chin.

His song was a mood piece, as are all Bushman songs except the medicine songs. It was a song of pure music without words, a song composed to express a feeling the composer had had, a mood, or an emotion. The mood songs do have names or titles, but these only tell the subject of the piece,

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

533 the minute incident that may have inspired the composition. Ukwane had composed this song himself, and from time to time he sang the words "bitter melons."

We stopped to listen, caught in the net of music which Ukwane had cast into the air, for it was a soft, sad song that he hummed and played, a song in a minor key to wring your heart, to make you think of places far away and make you feel like crying. Ukwane was so dark that he could hardly be seen against the black veld, and all that showed clearly was the yellow reed tapping and his filmed blue eyes. When he finished the song he put down his bow. We asked him what [534] the song was about and he told us: "If you are walking in the veld, and you remember where a field of melons was growing and you go there and find them but when you taste them they are bitter, so you can't eat them, you leave them, that is what this song is about."

We asked him to play another song and he obliged, playing a shorter, rhythmic one called "Pass on the Other Side," beautiful to our ears but not as beautiful as "Bitter Melons," a song Ukwane had composed when he had been humiliated. He had come into a werf where the people were sitting in a circle taking turns smoking a pipe, and Ukwane, who had wanted to smoke very badly, had seated himself beside the person who was smoking, hoping to be next in turn, but that person passed the pipe by Ukwane, and Ukwane did not receive it until all the others had smoked first. He had felt so badly to be treated in this way that he had gone for a walk in the veld, and while walking he had composed the song.

He sang one more song, which was called "A Song of Shouting," a song about his wife's brother who had lost his way in the veld near Ukwane's werf, and had shouted, expecting someone in the werf to answer him, to give him the direction, but no one had bothered to call to him. That night

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

Ukane had asked his wife if her brother had returned. She had answered "Yes," and Ukwane had composed the song about it out of guilt and sorrow.

"A Song of Shouting" was beautiful, too. When Ukwane had explained it to us and we had asked him to sing some more, he smiled at us and said that he was tired. But the day of jealousies, the fact that he had not found his piece of string, and the subject of his songs had put him in a mood, and presently he began to tell us what was in his heart.

He said that he was old and blind, and that he and his wife could no longer support one another but had to depend on Tsetchwe and Gai. Even Twikwe and Dasina were old and would not be strong much longer, and if Gai should leave them, perhaps to go to his Bakalahari father, the old people would perish surely.

Hearing Ukwane's cracked voice saying these sad things, his wife got up from her bed and sat beside him in silence. Soon Twikwe and Dasina joined him, too, so all the old people were there, crouching near the fire, their eyes gazing over its light out into the darkness.

Presently Dasina said: "It is bad to die because when you die you are all alone," and after being silent for a moment Ukwane told us how various members of his band, once a large one, had died, reducing their number to the hardy few who lived with him now. Both his father and his mother had died of thirst, and his children, his young nieces and nephews, and his grandchildren had all died in an epidemic of smallpox three years before. That had been a horrifying season, and in the hottest time, when the sun was drying them all and the ground was too hot to walk on, the smallpox had come, and pox had got into people's mouths so that they could not eat, and the children had all died one morning and their young mothers had died before night.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10

have the giraffe, rain, and gemsbok medicine. Others might have the ratel, fire, and gemsbok medicine. Ukwane's band had the sun, dove, and gemsbok medicine. Almost every band has the gemsbok medicine, for magically the gemsbok are very important animals, obvious from the black medicine markings on a gemsbok's face.

The medicine songs are songs without words and are given to both Kung and Gikwe Bushmen by the great god who sends his messengers, the spirits of the dead, to a sleeping person. The spirits of the dead teach the person a medicine song in a dream, and when the person awakens he teaches the song to the other members of his band.

At dances, women sing the medicine songs, men dance and use the medicine to cure people, for almost all men are made medicine men when they are in their late teens, after they have been initiated into manhood, having shot their first buck. They are made medicine men by older medicine men, and although any Bushman man may become a medicine man, only certain of them find that they have strong healing power, and these are the ones who practice, who fall into trance at dances and chase evil from their people. Ukwane himself had been one of these. None of the people he cured ever died, he said, but as he grew old his powers seemed to leave him, so now he did not practice any more. In his band Gai became the strong healer.

Of course, a medicine dance is a great affair, for it usually takes place at night and lasts all night into the morning. Everyone in the band takes part, every young boy old enough to walk may dance, every young girl may sing with the women, and women themselves may dance if they feel inclined. People talk, eat, and smoke between dances, or go off to bed to sleep for a while, so, all in all, dances are social af-

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

534 shaded his dwelling, had about sixty cocoons on each rattle of the pair, and in each cocoon, from which the pupa had been carefully extracted and the cocoon closed up again, there were from ten to twenty fragments of ostrich eggshell, each fragment chipped to a uniform size and round. Each pair of rattles, of course, is expected to last a lifetime and more, and I'm sure that Gai's rattles were older than he.

621 The day before we left, Ukwane's band and the visitors
578 from Okwa decided that since they were all together and in
756
533 sufficient number, they would hold a dance. Perhaps it would purge the bad season or relieve the strain of jealousies they felt toward each other. Dances are usually held at night, but this time, out of consideration for us, they agreed to hold it during the day so that we could film it. We found a place which would be suitable for filming, helped gather sufficient wood because there would have to be a fire, no matter how hot the day was, and as we did all this the six young boys got more and more excited, tried on dance rattles, danced tight little circles around each other and tugged at the elbows of the adults, urging them to start.

756 Some of the women wanted to sing, others felt too hot, too
535 tired, but the men walked among them encouraging them all.
533 A dance is long, hot work for women, the pleasure of dancing being mostly for the men. At last Twikwe and Dasina went to the spot chosen for the dance and, sitting side by side at the fire, their backs to everybody, sang a few bars and began to talk, then sang a little more, joined now by Tsetchwe, who sat beside them and began to sing in earnest. All three of them looked so small down in the grass and set up such a loud noise singing—for in order to interest the other women they were shricking the song at the top of their voices—that they seemed like three tree frogs or three cicadas, hard to notice in the landscape but putting forth earsplitting songs.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

At last a few more women joined the singers and the singing mounted, the voices took on several parts. At last the men began to join, dancing toward the circle in twos and threes, moaning the song in their throats, leaning on long staffs, their coming heralded by the dry, loud staccato of their rattles.

The men came from different directions, and they stood so tall and danced so strongly, with their muscles standing out on their necks, that their coming was like the coming of bull antelope, they were so radiant of strength and tension, they were so lithe and male. They came together out of the trees and, without the slightest change of pace, arranged themselves around the dance circle, wheeling slowly, one after the other, and the dance began.

The air was hot, the sun was shining strongly, the fire was sending a shuddering cloud of heat around the dancers, and as the dancers moved almost imperceptibly faster and faster, Gai suddenly flung his arms into the air and with a piercing shriek crashed to the ground. He landed stiffly with a bounce, his head cracking. On the ground he writhed and groaned, and Ukwane pulled him by the arms to remove his body from the dance circle.

Gai was in deep trance. Ukwane was ministering to Gai's body because Gai's spirit had rushed away.

Bushmen say that when the medicine in a medicine man becomes stimulated by a dance, warmed by the fire and by the heat of the man's body, the man's spirit may leave him, causing his body to fall because there is nothing there to hold it up, and fly into the veld, where it seeks out the evil that is troubling people. Some medicine men in this way have seen the spirits of the dead, some have seen the great god. At another dance we once attended, one man's spirit rushed into the veld, where it came upon a pride of lions that had been

The Dancers 137
Later, when the young boys had dispersed to play horse and
rider, Ukwane took his bow and played a few songs. He 533 ●
played "Bitter Melons" again, and "A Song of Shouting,"
and one other song about Kutera, his wife. Both the last song
and its subject were very simple, the song itself having only
three or four notes and a gentle rhythm. It was composed by
Ukwane one chilly night because he had asked Kutera to
gather firewood during the afternoon, but she had refused.
That night Ukwane had been cold because there was no fire.

Ukwane sang and played in the shade of a tree, and over
his head the birds in the branches were also singing. Every-
thing seemed very peaceful, very quiet under the hazy sky;
the west wind moved the grass, yellow as young wheat, and
blew the sounds of people speaking, the sounds of the young
boys playing, and the fragrance of the great veld over us. The
strain among the people seemed to have gone; they had held a
dance together, their children were playing calmly; there was,
for a time, enough to eat, as the gemsbok had not yet been
quite devoured; and all these things seemed to relax the peo-
ple, allowing them to see each other in more favorable lights.
Their naps and their soft singing showed their relaxation,
and we were glad, for we had become so fond of Ukwane and
his people that we did not like to think of them abandoned
by the Okwa people or involved in strife.

We were loading our trucks because we planned to leave
before dawn. At the end of the afternoon all the Bushmen
had drifted into our camp to watch us, and Tsetchwe helped 752
me pack. I cut my finger on the sharp edge of a box and when
she saw me trying to wipe the blood away she told me to
wait, so I did, and when the blood was dry she scratched
it all off with a stick.

We gave her presents, and presents to all the people there. 609
We gave blankets to the people in Ukwane's band, long 123
strings of white beads to everyone, metal to makes knives or

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

621 574 The other werfs were much nearer us, as the people wanted to keep an eye on each other, to see that we gave food or presents to all when we gave to one, but also because they enjoyed being together and wanted to be able to visit each other quickly at any time at all. Next to our camp on one side was Lazy Kwi's werf, and on the other side lived Toma with his wife and Gao Feet with his wives. At the far end of their werf lived Crooked Kwi with his wife and the old grandmother. They were between our camp and the pan, and beside their werf ran a pathway, the way used by the people on the other side of us to reach the water.

593 On the other side of the path, in the shade of a tree, lived one more small band, the band of a young man of perhaps thirty, who lived with his twelve-year-old son and his eight- [582] year-old wife, whom he was nourishing while waiting for her to grow. These young people had chosen their spot because [591] the little girl was Gao Feet's daughter by his first wife and was still so young that she wanted to live near her mother. She was a sad little girl with a grave face and troubled, wondering eyes; in fact, all these young people were very grave and sad—the young man's first wife had died and he now had no one to care for him because the little girl, his new wife, spent a great deal of time with her mother and he was left alone. The son was lonely too, having no mother and no one to care for him except his sad young father. His father was too troubled, too preoccupied, to be a companion to him, his little stepmother was too young, and he spent most of his time sitting on a rise of ground overlooking the werf where he lived, watching other people going by.

[142] The little girl took after her mother, Gao Feet's ugly wife, but her two men, her husband and her stepson, were a family
● 533 of great beauty. Both had wide, grave eyes and golden skins, and both were musicians, but the young father himself was

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

an Orpheus. He owned a *guashi*, a stringed instrument which he had made, and he carried his guashi wherever he went. As he plucked the strings, playing chords with his long fingers, he would hum the notes of a song that were not the same notes that his fingers were playing; he wove two themes and made a web of music, the guashi playing an intricate accompaniment while he sang a melody.

The guashi was made of a hollowed log about a foot long with a wooden lid fixed over it, forming a sounding-chamber. At one end of the log, five wands were fixed which held five sinew strings that reached from the tips of the wands to the opposite end of the log. Anyone but a Bushman finds it hard to play a guashi, for the strings are always slipping out of tune and the position one plays it in is awkward. The guashi is set on the ground and the player squats before it, holding it steady with his feet or the edges of his hands; but the sound is beautiful, sometimes full, sometimes thin, and makes very deep and various music, for Bushmen, their music being by far their greatest art, are not given to whistles or clear, shrill sounds—all their instruments make blurred and vibrant music with a richness in every note. Their compositions, too, are never simple, not even the music of their musical games, but always mixed, always subtle, partly gay but partly sad.

The songs and rhythms of the Kung are in no way as precise as those of the Gikwe, but the effect of Kung songs is deeper and, as the songs are freer, more impassioned. Like the songs of the Gikwe, the Kung songs are mood pieces. Because the guashi is made of mangetti wood, the songs are called "mangetti songs." The young man who owned the guashi knew many of these, but there were four that he sang very often, all wistful and quite sad, sometimes touched with irony. One of them was called "The Stump," a song about a man lost in the veld and wandering until at last he saw

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

another Bushman, and because he was so happy to see someone and imagined the two of them passing the night together talking by a fire, he waved and called and ran up to the other Bushman. But when he got there he found that he had been mistaken—what he had thought was a man had been only a stump.

A second song was about two jealous co-wives, and the song, more ironic than sad, was composed by the husband to ridicule them. The names of these two women were Nunkwe and Aite, which sound for all the world like Gikwe names, as perhaps they were, and we wondered how far this song had traveled, by how many ears and mouths, before it found itself at Nama Pan.

The third song was called "*Chiviba,*" a song composed by a young man who had brought veld food to his people in a chiviba, a basket made of branches. His people laughed at him and said that he was lazy not to have a bag to carry the veld food in, but nevertheless they were not too proud to eat what he had brought. The fourth song was called "*Ka Te Te,*" the song of the redwing partridge. The redwing partridge is most strongly tabued as food, may never be eaten, and *ka te te* is an imitation of its cry. The song was composed by a man who heard a redwing partridge making a sound in the evening and knew that the sound foretold a misfortune or a death.

Because the young man who owned the guashi was lonely and brooding, it was natural that he should play. The other people loved to hear him and often when he played several people, usually men, would gather to lie in the shade near him or sit beside him with their chins on their raised knees and listen, sometimes singing softly as he sang, very harmoniously, but paying no attention, just singing in their own way within a set harmony, dreaming and soft, and although the young man played for his own ears, not theirs, he could infect

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

them with his moods and when he stopped playing and they went away, they, too, were brooding.

Many young people had come to Nama, and together they made Nama very gay. The boys played a game with wands, throwing the wands at a hummock of ground and watching them bounce off and sail into the grass on the other side, the nearest that Bushmen come to a competitive game, for the young boys like to see whose wand goes the farthest.

The girls played a singing game with a melon. They would stand in a row that formed a half-circle dancing in place while the girl at one end would spring into the middle of the circle and toss a melon to the girl next to her in line. The game is accompanied by a rapid, intricate song of several parts sung in falsetto voices, as pretty to hear as the game is pretty to see, for the girls dance with their arms and heads as well as with their feet, like the dancers of Bali.

At that time there were only two adolescent unmarried girls at Nama. One of these was Beautiful Ungka, the other was her cousin, and they both lived with the cousin's parents at one of the werfs of the people from Gam. They were both extremely beautiful and they were lilies of the field. Since they were their parents' only children, they had no younger brothers or sisters to mind, and did nothing at all from one day to the next but adorn and amuse themselves, and this they did together, for they were the best of friends. They were straight and slender, with pale-gold skin not yet darkened and weathered by the sun of the veld, and they had flat bellies and high, small breasts. Beautiful Ungka had nipples like knobs, rounded like balls. Both girls wore ornamented aprons, soft leather capes—the best that there is. Many bead ornaments hung from their hair and swung when they walked, and almost hid their handsome faces.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

Those were two willful girls, too beautiful, too proud, too much admired, but the young boys couldn't do enough for them. It was one of their admirers who cleared the grass for the werf that the cousin's parents were building, and though the two girls teased and ridiculed the boy all the while, snickering contemptuously at him from behind their swinging beads, he worked on happily until not a blade of grass remained.

882 572 857

But Beautiful Ungka and her cousin were not as sophisticated as they thought they were, really, for when they would hear the music of the melon game they would abandon their poise and decorum to run for the sound, arms waving, ornaments and clothing streaming out behind, and when they found the game they had been hearing they would jump into the middle of it and play with abandon, singing loudly and dancing fast for fun. Also, Beautiful Ungka could spit through her teeth like a man. She could draw back her head and spit ten feet and she did this often, smiling scornfully, an astonishing accomplishment for such a handsome girl. Her cousin used to try it too; she could spit a little way but not nearly as far as Beautiful Ungka.

883 526

After all, they were only sixteen. There is a Bushman mood song with these words:

533 539

I am tired and old and without people,
I wish I could marry a young girl.

There were so many great fires around Nama that the sky was dark with their smoke, and when the sun rose in the morning, one day shortly after we had got there, we could not even see it until it was far above the horizon and then it appeared red and enormous, murky. In the west two new fires had sprung up, perhaps lit by Bushmen to show where they were

132

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

ing happily, but all the adults in all the werfs were too depressed and sad. Finally, one by one, the men went back again to Short Kwi, who by now had rallied and was sitting up, surely having been through the worst of it the night before, and talked to him about the antelopes he had killed and about the time he killed a wildebeest, an eland, and a wild pig all in one day.

It has been said that Bushmen abandon cripples or people who are old or sick and cannot travel. This is not true.

Far into the night, people who could not sleep sat up and talked at each other's fires. We heard the guashi being played, its long strings sounding in repetitious little songs of four or five notes which themselves were played over and over, for the guashi was being passed from hand to hand, played idly by people who just wanted something to do.

It was a warm night. The frogs in the pan were croaking and the north wind blew the cooking-fires around. Later, when the moon rose and made a blood-red fire all its own, the people began to go home. Toma and Gao Feet and their sons stopping to visit us on their way; they walked silently up to our fire from the darkness and dropped to their haunches one after the other, and sat quietly, their grave faces tilted back, hands shading their eyes. Toma's son wore the crown of badger hair, which moved in the wind a little. Presently the men and their sons stood up again one at a time and walked on, as silently on their bare feet as they had come. We heard the low voices of other people who were passing, then saw fires flare up at the werfs, and much later, when the wind had died and even the frogs were silent, we knew that some of the people were dreaming, for they groaned in their sleep.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

very sleek and prosperous, for they were staggering under loads of food, their bags and nets bulging with tsi and their carrying-poles strung with the meat of the gemsbok. They put down their loads and the women began immediately to make a large and busy werf on the far side of Toma's. In a very short time the werf was built and strewn with food and objects, and the people sitting among their possessions looked so comfortable and settled that one would never have thought that they had just arrived.

The old woman, Short Kwi's mother-in-law, did cry when she found her daughter gone. She squatted sadly on the ground and wiped her tears from her wrinkled, dusty cheeks with her fingers. All her relatives, clustered around her, trying to comfort her, telling her that, after all, her daughter would return, that she herself would be looked after and not allowed to starve, and presently the old woman stopped crying, wiped her eyes, and got up to build herself a tiny hut, a shade of grass and branches.

That night, when darkness fell, when the moon rose blood red among the trees and the frogs in the pan began their singing, we were again sitting by our fire, again hosts to a good many visitors, when we heard high voices singing a medicine song. We stood up to look over the grass and saw a fire where no werf was, with five young girls around it singing, clapping a rhythm, their faces lit red by the fire and their backs lit palely by the moon. They were all alone there, far from their homes.

We asked our visitors if there was going to be a dance, which did not seem likely, everyone being in such low spirits, and those who wanted to dance said yes while those who didn't said no. Soon some little children joined the dance, though, among them Little Gashe and Little Dabe. Little

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

535 854 kaross, and carried them to their mother; in this way, one by one, the dancing babies were eliminated and the circle was left to the men.

535 786 The dance went on all night, reaching a climax after midnight when the moon was high and sailing overhead. The medicine men were seized with trances that shook their bodies and rattled their teeth and sent them rushing headlong into the black shadows to curse at the spirits of the dead. Dust mounted, the sound of the high singing and the rattles was deafening, and even in the pauses between dances the medicine men screamed.

535 When hours had passed, when the moon was low and only its thick red glow showed on the horizon, the dance reached a lull and many people went home. Soon only a core of dancers and singers remained, perhaps twenty people in all. These were the strong young men, wiry enough to have withstood ten hours of dancing, and the old widows and middle-aged women, those who had no small children to worry them, women who were tougher than the young girls and did not mind that they felt tired. It is a strong thing to dance all night; it brings powerful, enduring medicine, and these few people, willing to withstand fatigue and cold, wore away the night to dance for the medicine of the rising sun.

When the moon was down and the dance fire had burned to embers, was almost out, I went to the veld to gather firewood. Just then the first stars began to dim in the soft, cold air, the eastern sky turned pale; faintly, the first birds began 535 533 to cry, and from where I stood in the veld I heard the song change to the sun-dance. The song lasted only for a moment, as the singers acknowledged the paleness, and a little later, as the light in the east became brighter and the colors of the

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

veld began to show, the women sang the sun-dance fully, a song quite different from the others, very even, very simple, steady, dignified, and grave.

The dawn wind lifted and blew away the smoke and dust and made the people shiver. The light showed the dancers moving stiffly, the singers hunched together for support and warmth, and revealed dusty, dirty faces and dirty teeth. Dust had made mud in the corners of our mouths and eyes.

Only about ten women were singing in the circle now, and they sat all together at one spot, leaving a lot of space around the fire; only four men danced and they moved slowly in their track, burdened by their rattles. They, too, stayed close together so that most of their huge track was bare.

When the sun was over the horizon the dance stopped. The women ended their song abruptly, stood up, shook the dust and straw from their clothing, and walked away. They did not speak to one another because they were tired. The men talked for a moment as they sat down, stretched, untied their rattles, before walking off two by two toward their werfs. Soon all that remained was the dance track, a deep circular rut in the ground, the big heap of dead white ashes, and the dusty bushes and trees.

The people who had been dancing during the night slept all through the heat of the day and as the afternoon came, lying in the shade of trees and bushes. Flies buzzed over them, the afternoon shadows lengthened and the day cooled, and still they slept on.

When the light was red and the sun was almost setting, the women began to stir, getting to their feet slowly, and then alone or in twos and threes, followed by their children, walked down the path to the water, the last ones to leave

12: Marshall E-5 (1951-1959) 1961 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

deadly poisoned arrows are always at hand. Men have killed each other with them in quarrels—though rarely—and the /Kung fear fighting with a conscious and active fear. They speak about it often. Any expression of discord ('bad words') makes them uneasy. Their desire to avoid both hostility and rejection leads them to conform in high degree to the unspoken social law. If they do deviate they usually yield readily to expressed group opinion and reform their ways. I think that most /Kung cannot bear the sense of rejection which even mild disapproval makes them feel. They also conform strictly to certain specific useful customs which are like instruments for avoiding discord.

Talking and 'Talks'

I mention talking as an aid to peaceful social relations because it is so very much a part of the daily experience of the /Kung and, I believe, usefully serves three particular functions. It keeps up good open communication among the members of the band; through its constantly flowing expression it is a salutary outlet for emotions; and it serves as the principal sanction in social discipline. Songs are also used for social discipline. The /Kung say that a song composed specifically about someone's behaviour and sung to express disapproval, perhaps from the deepest shadow of the werf at night, is a very effective means of bringing people who deviate back into the pattern of approved behaviour. Nevertheless, during our observations, songs were not used as much as talking. If people disapprove of an individual's behaviour, they may criticize him or her directly, usually putting a question, 'Why do you do that?' or they may gossip a bit or make oblique hints. In the more intense instances 'a talk' may ensue.

The /Kung are the most loquacious people I know. Conversation in a /Kung werf is a constant sound like the sound of a brook, and as low and lapping, except for shrieks of laughter. People cluster together in little groups during the day, talking, perhaps making artifacts at the same time. At night families talk late by their fires, or visit at other family fires with their children between their knees or in their arms if the wind is cold.

There always seems to be plenty to talk about. People tell about events with much detail and repetition and discuss the comings and goings of their relatives and friends and make plans. Their greatest preoccupation and the subject they talk about most often, I think, is food. The men's imaginations turn to hunting. They converse musingly, as though enjoying a sort of day-dream together, about past hunts, telling over and over where game was found and who killed it. They wonder where the game is at present and say what fat bucks they hope to kill. They also plan their next hunts with practicality. Women (who, incidentally, do not talk as much as men) gave me the impression of talking more about who gave or did not give them food and their anxieties about not having food. They spoke to me about women who were remembered for being especially quick and able gatherers, but did not have pleasurable satisfaction in remembering their hot, monotonous, arduous days of digging and picking and trudging home with their heavy loads.

Another frequent subject of conversation is gift-giving. Men and women speak of the persons to whom they have given or propose to give gifts. They express satisfaction or dissatisfaction with what they have received. If someone has delayed

13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

It was characteristic of the /Kung that none of the medicine men whom we knew claimed to have seen ≠*Gao!na*. They were not great enough, they said. The /Kung do not wish to risk drawing upon themselves the invidious attention of mortals or the whimsical displeasure of the gods by setting themselves up noticeably before others. Some said that they had been told by their parents of only one great medicine man among their neighbouring bands who had seen ≠*Gao!na*. His name was Gao. He died long ago.

Although ≠*Gao!na* comes only to the great medicine men 'in the flesh', so to speak, he appears to anyone in dreams and 'helps all his people'. A hunter said that ≠*Gao!na* stands beside one in one's dream and says, 'You have been walking and walking and you got nothing. Today I shall give you meat.' The hunter gets up and goes out on to the veld. He sees an animal and shoots it. ≠*Gao!na* may say, on the other hand, 'These days you will not find an animal even if you hunt'; and it will be the truth. He may tell you in a dream where to find honey in a tree or where to find an ant hill. He gives power to the medicine men in dreams and also medicine songs. A medicine woman described vividly how he had taught her a medicine song which she then gave to her people. He stood beside her instructing her to sing the song over and over until she had learned it.

//GAUWA, THE LESSER GOD

Among the Nyae Nyae /Kung the word *//Gauwa* has three interpretations. First, a *//gauwa* is the spirit of a dead person; the spirits of the dead in the plural are *//gauwasi*. Second, the Nyae Nyae /Kung, as we have said, call the children born to the gods 'little *//gauwasi*'. Third, they apply the name *//Gauwa* to both the great and the lesser god. It is one of the seven names they have in common. In the current beliefs of the Nyae Nyae /Kung there is not a being called *//Gauwa* who is a separate entity apart from the great and the lesser god.

Among other Bushmen and the Hottentots, *//Gauwa* was a being distinct from the other being who is variously named *Hishe*, *Huwe*, *Xu*, &c. As I interpret the present belief of the /Kung, the lesser god is that old, traditional *//Gauwa*. He has been transmuted, however, from the old image to a new one, as the old protagonist, ≠*Gao!na*, was transmuted into the great god. *//Gauwa*'s name has been attributed to the great god as the great god's names have been attributed to him. The two beings remain separate entities in the */gu!na–/gumsa* relationship.

I base the interpretation that the lesser god is the traditional *//Gauwa* on the facts that many of his attributes are the same as or similar to those of the traditional being and that I did not hear people use any other name for him but *//Gauwa* and did not once hear the name *//Gauwa* used for the great god when people spoke spontaneously of him, although they insisted that it was one of the seven names which the gods have in common.

Excerpts from Schapera indicate that *//Gauwa* was generally the destroyer. Vedder reports that the /Kung at Tsumeb expect only evil from him and think of him as opposed to *Huwe*. But Lebzelter's Eastern Kung believed that he was good as well as evil, that he helped hunters, and some thought he was the creator. 'He is everywhere and moves between heaven and earth on cords.'[1] By the Heikum also he was

[1] Schapera, op. cit., p. 188.

13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

Why does the lightning not go and die somewhere and leave us alone and just let a gentle rain give us water?' 782

If someone were struck and killed by lightning, Gao Medicine said he would say,

'*Hishe*, why have you taken this person? Why do you strike us with storm? You cannot always be good; you keep changing. You created all things and are present in every movement. Why must you do ill?'

About another storm, Gao Medicine said,

'It is */Nau* who makes these things. He is scolding us because we are his children. It is because of our bad ways we are so punished. We must not complain. This is a good time, the time of rain. We must not complain.'

When the people are pleased they thank ≠*Gao/na* and say, 'This is how you must serve your children.'

The /Kung pray directly to *‖Gauwa* as well as to ≠*Gao/na*. One old man named Tuka/na made a prayer into a song and taught it to his people. The men sometimes sing it when they are walking along in the veld on hunting trips. It says in effect: [533]

'*‖Gauwa* must help us that we kill an animal.
‖Gauwa, help us. We are dying of hunger.
‖Gauwa does not give us help.
He is cheating. He is bluffing.
‖Gauwa will bring something for us to kill next day
After he himself hunts and has eaten meat,
When he is full and is feeling well.'

The song then changes to the past tense and tells how *‖Gauwa* favoured them in the past and gave them luck in the hunt and they ate and afterwards the man said to the women:

'You must sing well.
We are happy now.
Our hearts are shining.
I shall put on my rattles,
And put on my headband,
And put a feather in my hair
To explain to *‖Gauwa* how happy we are that he has helped us and that we have eaten.
My heart is awake.
When we do not have meat
My heart is sad from hunger
Like an old man, sick and slow.
When we have meat my heart is lively.

The concerns and anxieties of these people are manifest in their prayers. The pervasive, unremitting anxiety about food becomes vividly apparent. The concept that ≠*Gao/na* has great power and that he is not evil incarnate, but has a dual nature which can feel pity as well as displeasure, makes beneficence a possibility. The /Kung believe that, influenced by the medicine men's scolding or by supplication, he may change his evil intent, and this gives them hope. [154 776]

13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

796
535

The Ceremonial Curing Dance

The ceremonial curing dance is the one religious act which has form and in which the people are united. The purpose of the dance is to cure sickness and to drive away evil. If there is actual sickness among the people or if real misfortune has come upon them, the dance will be held especially to cure these ills. But the people dance often when no one is actually known to be sick, and when no particular misfortune has come, to drive away evil which might be there but which one cannot see, and to feel protected by goodness.

The protecting goodness is the ' medicine ', the magic power called *gaoxa*, which the /Kung believe the great god puts into the bodies of the medicine men and into the medicine songs. The /Kung believe that the great god endowed the power with its own autonomous potency, but nevertheless account for its failing to cure sometimes by saying that the all-powerful god allows it to work or not, according to his pleasure or displeasure. *Gaoxa* is the power evoked and activated during the curing dance.

I believe the ceremonial curing dance to be a religious act, but, although very serious, especially in its final curing aspect, it is not piously solemn or constrained [517] and it provides occasion for pleasure and aesthetic satisfaction. The music can be [533] sung at any time, for lullabies or just for singing. Music and dancing are the arts of the /Kung. The good young dancers, especially, feel the delight which is inherent in fine integration of movement and rhythm (one can see this clearly), and the people watch and admire good dancing and take pleasure in it, and in the music.

Furthermore, the dances are a socially unifying factor. All the people of the werf [852] come together and participate, men and women, old and young. The men often dance with their babies on their shoulders in the early part of the dance, and the children dance and play among them, until they fall fast asleep in their mothers' laps.

[883] Anyone who wants a dance may start it by going around to people and asking them to come and begin. Someone who was sick would ask for a dance, but young people who love to dance often start just for fun. Sometimes their dances do not turn into curing dances, but usually, once the music begins, the adults join in and the dance becomes a real one. The dances last all night oftener than not. There is a special potency in those which are danced at dawn. The /Kung dance, at irregular intervals, on an average of once in ten days, more or less. Almost invariably they dance at least once during the full moon.

Among the /Kung the women and girls always sit close together in a circle around a dance fire which may be built wherever there is convenient clear space. Their function is to clap and sing. The men dance in a line, one close behind the another, around the circle of women, in either direction, and cut through the circle past the fire. They sing as they dance. Occasionally a woman gets up and dances with them, though it is not her role, as though she could no longer resist the impulse. When a woman joins the line of dancers, the man behind her holds out his arms towards her but does not touch her. She dances with dignity, making tiny stamping steps, hardly moving, eyes cast down. If there is a delicate overtone of eroticism expressed in the dancing of the women, it is most subtle and constrained—in extreme contrast to the overt expression of many of the Bantu dances.

13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

The dancing of the men in the curing ceremonial dances has its own special style. In other dances, that of the *Choma*, the Men's Dance, the Eland Dance of the First Menstruation Ceremony, and in the numerous singing-dancing or rhythmic games which the /Kung play for fun, one sees enchanting pantomime and imitation of animals. In the ceremonial dances we sometimes thought we saw what might be a vestige of the imitation of animals' horns in the way the arms were held, but in comparison with the visual expressiveness of the games, the purpose is not to express by gesture but to produce sound, to be part of the music.

The men wear rattles made of strings of dried cocoons with little seeds or stones inside, which make a swishing sound. These are the only instruments used in the dance. (The /Kung, incidentally, have no drums.) The men dance with knees bent and bodies carried with little motion, leaning forward. On the strong accented beat, the dancer gives a hop and comes down with both feet. On the second beat he holds his weight on one foot (alternating right and left) and with the other stamps a single step or ripples two or three light stamps into the time of the single step. The steps are very precise. They are minute in size, advancing only two or three inches, but they are strongly stamped, and ten or twenty dancers stamping together produce a loud thud. The women clap loudly and sharply. The majority of them clap the basic pattern of a particular piece, while some strike a beat or beats which are complementary to the basic beat. The clapping and stamping are of such precision that they give the effect of a well-played battery of percussion instruments producing a solid structure of intricate rhythm. Above the percussion sounds, the voices of the men and women weave together in parts, singing the medicine songs.[1] Since singing and dancing are one, producing the music, I speak of medicine songs or medicine dances interchangeably.

The medicine songs or dances of the /Kung are named *Rain*, *Sun*, *Giraffe*, *Eland*, *Honey*, *Buffalo*, and *Mamba*. Some of the /Kung have *Gemsbok* and *Spider* Medicine music as well. The Rain Dance is not danced as a specific rain-making ceremony. The dances named for animals do not produce magic to control these animals in hunting or to prevent snake-bite, for example. The dances are named for these things because the things are vital, life-and-death things and they are strong, as the curing medicine in the music is strong.

After several dances have been danced the medicine men begin to cure. The /Kung do not have sorcerers, witches, or witch doctors, and do not believe that the divine beings enter into the medicine men or speak through them. Almost all the /Kung men are medicine men. They do not all choose to practise, for one reason or another, but there are always several in a band who are active. Medicine men receive no rewards other than their inner satisfactions and emotional release. I know that some of them feel a deep responsibility for the welfare of their people and great anxiety and concern if their curing fails, and a corresponding satisfaction if it prevails. Others of them appear to be less concerned about the people whom they try to cure and more inwardly turned.

When the medicine men are curing, all of them experience varying degrees of self-induced trance, which includes a period of frenzy and a period of semi-

[1] Nicholas England is in the process of tracing the songs and analysing the music, and he has a paper in preparation which will include /Kung beliefs and practices about them.

15: Marshall E-5 (1951-1961) 1965
FX10 Bushmen FX10
!Kung

other genital operations are not practiced by the !Kung. The *Choma* is not compulsory; most boys take part but a few refuse. *Choma* owners do not form a corporate sodality. !Kung society has no such units except kinship groups.

Another ceremony for boys, which is presumably ancient and traditionally Bushman, must be performed before a boy can marry. This ceremony is performed twice for each boy, individually, on the occasion of his first killing a large game animal, once for the first male, once for the first female. The meat is cooked at a special fire, which women must avoid, and is eaten ceremonially by the men. The boy is scarified, by his father or another male relative, on his right side for the first male animal, on his left side for the first female. Little vertical cuts are made in his skin in lines on his arms, chest, back, and forehead, and a paste of charred meat and fat is rubbed into them. This is to ensure his seeing well, shooting well, and having a heart that will say to him, "Why am I sitting here in the werf? Why am I not out hunting?"

The passage from childhood to adulthood is marked for a !Kung girl by a ceremony at her first menstruation. The girl is isolated in a special scherm for the duration of the flow only. She must be covered by a kaross because the sun must not shine upon her, and her feet must not touch the ground. When she must go out to urinate or defecate, she is carried on the back of the old woman (not her mother) who attends her. It is not the menstrual blood but the girl herself who must be kept from touching the ground. She would get thin if she disregarded this taboo. Men and boys must not look at the girl and she must not look at them lest the men become highly visible to animals and unable to get near enough to them to shoot.

Every day that the girl is in the menstruation scherm, the women who are present and one or two old men dance a special dance called the Eland Dance and sing a special cycle of First Menstruation music. The Eland Dance is full of sex symbolism. The two old men should be free from even the most attenuated, symbolic extension of the incest taboo with respect to the girl, and it follows that they should have what is called the joking relationship with her. The usual strict modesty of the women is set aside. They take off their karosses (leaving their aprons on, however) and hang strings of beads from their waists down over their bare buttocks. The old men, with forked sticks tied to their heads to represent eland horns, imitate the gait and carriage of elands, and dance among the women with subtly erotic gestures. The other men and boys of the werf must stay at a distance.

When the girl stops menstruating she is washed, rubbed with *tsi* and fat, and her face is painted with red lines. She then may go among the people again, but the first time she takes water from the water hole and the first time she cooks and eats veldkos, the water and veldkos must be

15: Marshall E-5 (1951-1961) 1965
FX10 Bushmen FX10
!Kung

(the same word as the title of respect). The !Kung say it is strong medicine: /*num*. The !Kung take for granted his giving to man both sickness and the power to cure it, and account for the power's sometimes failing to cure by saying that the all-powerful god allows it to work, or not, according to his pleasure.

He gives the curing power to medicine men (called *num kxao*, medicine owners), appearing to them (usually in dreams, sometimes in what seem to be waking hallucinations) and putting the power into them. He has also put a curing power in the medicine songs that the people sing at the dances, songs named Rain, Sun, Giraffe, Eland, Honey, Buffalo, Mamba, and Spider —all powerful things. The great god gives the power freely. It is rare to find a man among the !Kung who is not a medicine man. The function of the medicine men is only to cure. They are not sorcerers or witch doctors. (The !Kung are not a witch-ridden people.) !Kung medicine men receive no rewards or special prerogatives. They work together apparently without rivalry. The medicine men may cure at any time but their strongest curing occurs at the dance.

Whether or not anyone is sick, the people dance two or three times a month, sometimes more often. Anyone who wants a dance may start one simply by asking people to come and begin. The !Kung like to dance for many reasons. There is the inherent physical pleasure in moving to rhythm. Music and dancing are their arts, from which their aesthetic pleasure comes. The dances are also social gatherings in which all participate, men, women, children, visitors—everybody. A dance draws them together as nothing else does. Even more important is the fact that the dance is one concerted religious act of the !Kung and brings people into such unison that they become like an organic being.

At the dances not only may the sick be cured, but pending evil and misfortune averted. The !Kung believe that the great god may send /*Gauwa* or the /*gauwasi* at any time with ill for someone and that these beings may be lurking, awaiting their chance to inflict it. The medicine men in the dances combat them, drive them away, and protect the people.

Usually there are several medicine men performing at the same time. To cure they go into trance, which varies in depth as the ceremony proceeds. The curing cannot be described in words; it must be heard. When a man begins, he leaves the line of dancing men and, still singing, leans over the person he is going to cure, going eventually to every person present, even the infants. He places one hand on the person's chest, one on his or her back, and flutters his hands. The !Kung believe that in this way he draws the sickness, real or potential, out of the person through his own arms into himself. To demonstrate that this is in fact going on and is hard to do, he grunts with shuddering grunts that intensify in tempo and pitch into shrieks and reach a high piercing, quavering yell. Finally, the medicine man throws up his arms

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date)1930
FX13 Hottentot
Bushmen FX10

535 which the performers imitated all the actions and droll grimaces of
825 rival baboons, springing, gambolling, and running upon all fours, chattering and grimacing like a troop of excited simiadae. Another, and one which also appeared a favourite amongst them, was the *'Kloo-rou-o*, or Frog dance, in which they squatted, and leaped, and rolled about like a lot of inebriated batrachians. A third of this kind was the *t'Oi*, or Bee dance, when the company transformed themselves into a swarm of bees, and performed their evolutions with a buzzing chorus. "On special occasions," Stow continues, "they held a general masquerade, when each one took the disguise or head-dress of some particular bird or animal, and upheld the character during the performance. This appears to have been considered one of their grand national dances, and was reserved for their high festivals; it was one which even their greatest artists delighted to depict, and probably it had some hidden meaning known to the initiated."[1] It is not unlikely, as Stow suggests, that such dances were also of a ritual character, but of their function and relation to the social life generally hardly anything is known.

526 Games are often played in the evenings too, by grown-up people
535 of both sexes as well as by children.[2] A favourite game of the women, found among the Southern Bushmen, as well as in the north, is a ball game which is almost a dance. The players stand in a line
● [533] clapping their hands and singing a wordless tune. One of them dances about opposite the others with a melon or round tuber in her hand. At the end of the tune she throws the ball to the player at the right hand of the line, who dances out to catch it, and herself dances back to the left end, where she joins in the singing and clapping. The next player does the same, and so the game goes on till all have had several turns. Sometimes, again, they play at the capture of
524 brides by young men, as among the Naron, or at games based on
536 animal experiences, as among the Heikum. One of the latter, for instance, represents how a white monkey was once seen by a woman who ran home and told the others. "The part of the monkey is taken by a woman who stands with her hands covering the sides of her face, leaving only a small opening for peeping through. She sways her head from side to side. The other women form up in a row opposite to her. One goes forward to look at the monkey, gazes at it intently and, when the latter starts moving its head from side to

[1] Op. cit., 117–18.
[2] Stow, op. cit., 97–102; Kaufmann, op. cit., 149–50; D. F. Bleek, op. cit., 18–21; Fourie op. cit., 97–8.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date)1930
FX13 Hottentot
Bushmen FX10

524 857 and pretend to dip it out. The 'snake' from time to time flicks sand at them with his finger, he is supposed to be squirting water. The others start back and scream, then gather once more round the 'pool'. At last the 'snake' jumps up, seizes a victim and pretends to swallow it, which ends the game."[1]

●533 Some of the children's games, as in the one just described, have songs or refrains attached to them, in which the words are occasionally [535] obsolete. All the dances are also accompanied by singing, many of them having their own special tune, but here the tunes are often sung without words. Other songs, again, go with the playing of musical instruments. The tunes are as a rule very short, and are generally repeated over and over again without variation, so that the effect is rather monotonous. "All Bushmen sing," says Miss Bleek,[2] "but their tunes are not easy for a European to distinguish, much less to write down." And, referring to the dance tunes, [535] she adds: "The time is perfect, but no two in a chorus seem to hit the same note, though the general burden of the tune is kept up. That is to say, they all go up together, but not from or to the same note, and they all go down together, each hitting any note they please."

534 Musical instruments are seldom used to accompany the dances, although several different kinds are found.[3] Many of them are variations of the musical bow. The best known of these, the */goura*, was the favourite instrument in the south. It consists in an ordinary bow, in which one end of the string, instead of being fastened to the stave itself, is attached to a flexible piece of quill spliced to the end of the stave. This quill is held against the lips, and made to vibrate by strong expirations and inspirations of the breath, thus producing the effect of a stringed wind instrument. Another form of the musical bow, commonly known as the */gubo*, has a gourd or tortoise-shell attached to the stave of the bow so as to serve as a sounding-box. The instrument is played by picking at the string with a small piece of wood or bone. A development of this sometimes seen consists in playing it like a primitive sort of violin, with a small bow for sounding the string. This mode of playing was probably adopted [177] from a European source, as the use of a bow after the manner of a

[1] D. F. Bleek, op. cit., 19. [2] Op. cit., 22.
[3] Stow, op. cit., 102–11; Passarge, op. cit., 93–8; Gretschel, "Die Buschmannsammlung Hannemann," 111–12; Kaufmann, op. cit., 150–1; D. F. Bleek, *Natal*, 21–2; Balfour, "The Goura—A Stringed Wind Musical Instrument of the Bushmen and Hottentots," *J.R. Anthrop. Inst.*, xxxii (1902), 156–76.